

Witness Name: J R Briggs
Statement No: WITN1106001
Exhibits: 0
Dated: 17th January 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF JONATHAN ROLAND BRIGGS

I, Jonathan Roland Briggs, will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Jonathan Roland Briggs. I was born on GRO-C 1956 and live at GRO-C with my wife. I am retired.
2. **This statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my medical records.**

Section 2. How infected

3. I was diagnosed with moderate Haemophilia A at about the age of 14 or 15 at the West Middlesex Hospital, when internal bleeds left me in pain. My older brother, who has since died, was also diagnosed with Haemophilia.
4. In approximately 1976-1977, I believe I was treated with Factor VIII products at Exeter Hospital at least twice; when I had an operation for a sebaceous cyst and again after an accident. I was treated by Dr Black at Norfolk and

Norwich Hospital where I received Factor VIII products 3 to 4 times a year. I believe it was called Lister Concentrate. I also received Factor VIII at Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge.

5. No advice was given to me or my parents about the risk of being exposed to infection from blood products.
6. I confirm I was infected with Hepatitis C as a result of being given contaminated blood products. I do not know when I was infected.
7. On a Saturday in about 1995, I was called in to see my GP (Dr Malpas) who told me I had Hepatitis C and that it was potentially serious.
8. I was not given any information about managing Hepatitis C or the risks of infecting others.
9. I consider that I should have been provided with detailed information as soon as my doctor was aware I had Hepatitis C but my GP didn't seem to know that much about it.

Section 3. Other Infections

10. In approximately 1978, I was also infected with Hepatitis A which could have been a result of being given infected blood products. Following this infection, I was poorly for nearly two months.

Section 4. Consent

11. I believe I was tested for Hepatitis C without my knowledge and therefore without my consent.
12. I do not know if I have been treated without my knowledge or consent or whether I have been tested for the purposes of research.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

13. I am pragmatic by nature and consider I did not really suffer any mental effects as a result of being infected with Hepatitis C.
14. However, physically I was very, very tired and would spend several days each week in bed. I could not take part in sporting activities such as windsurfing, cycling, and walking which I had previously enjoyed.
15. In approximately 2015-2016, I received the newly available treatment named Harvoni which finally cleared my Hepatitis C virus.
16. Initially, I was treated with Interferon which resulted in me feeling awful. I suffered night sweats with my temperature fluctuating and I was tired all the time and I did not have any energy to do anything.
17. I was later told that despite clearing the virus I had chronic cirrhosis of the liver.
18. In 2001, having chronic cirrhosis of the liver, I had a liver transplant and to prevent rejection I was treated with high doses of steroids. As a result of this, I was diagnosed with impaired functions of my pancreas which led to me developing Type 1 diabetes. I now have to take 4 doses of insulin a day. I also had to have an operation to have the mesh in the scar from the liver transplant repaired.
19. I have also suffered from bouts of Encephalopathy; one of which resulted in me being placed in an induced coma for a week in Addenbrooke's Hospital which is one of the leading centres for transplants in the UK. At the time, the doctors told my wife "*when he regains consciousness, he might not be the same person*" due to the severity of this procedure.
20. In 2016, I was diagnosed with throat cancer which could well have been caused by the immunosuppressants (Sirolimus/Rapamune) which I was given to stop rejection of the donor organ. Immunosuppressants are medication

which is then taken for the rest of one's life and reduce the ability to fight diseases including cancer. As far as I am aware, there is no history of cancer in my family.

21. I received radiotherapy 6 days a week for 3 weeks and have now been given the all clear. The radiotherapy was horrible as I couldn't swallow for 4 months and I can no longer sing. I had previously sung in two bands and enjoyed performing opera when I was young.

22. I consider that the new diabetes treatment by which you are constantly monitored and connected to a smart phone so you don't have to test your blood 4 times daily should be made available for free on the NHS as the NHS gave me the diabetes.

23. Having started life as a haemophiliac, I was in and out of hospital throughout my whole life and this is what I had to accept since I was a young boy. Illnesses as such didn't bother me; it was just a part of my life. However, my wife and children have been upset and worried especially before my liver transplant and during the radiotherapy. I have also had long periods of recovery when I was unable to do things, which impacted on what activities, if any, we could do together.

24. I owned a business distributing pharmaceuticals to hospitals and pharmacies, including 6 pharmacies of my own, but I was unable to work when I suffered bouts of Encephalopathy. This was a worry which put additional pressure on my business partner and employees. I had to make changes to the business to cover my illness. I eventually sold the business in 2007.

25. I now live in France for 6 months a year and I have to pay for any treatment (hospital and blood tests) that I need there as EHIC doesn't apply whereas when I am in England I am entitled to free prescriptions, as I am over 60 and diabetic.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

26. I have had no difficulties in obtaining treatment, care and support as a consequence of being infected with Hepatitis C but I have not been able to receive the new diabetic treatment from the NHS mentioned in paragraph 16 above.

27. I do not recollect ever being offered counselling or psychological support but in any event I don't think I need it.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

28. I received a lump sum of £43,000 from the Skipton Fund in approximately 2011-2012 and I receive about £14,749 per annum from the Skipton Fund.

29. I do not recollect any difficulties in applying for the awards and consider the process was straight forward as I had evidence of my Hepatitis C.

30. My only observation about the Skipton Fund is that I am glad that it is available for those who need it.

Section 8. Other Issues

31. The investigation by the Inquiry will affect so many haemophiliacs. The impact on the haemophilia community has been terrible. It has taken so long and many people have died. It has been brushed under the carpet, for so long the length of time it has taken to get a public inquiry means recollections of events is more difficult.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

32. I do not wish to apply for anonymity and I am happy to give oral evidence if it is required.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed ... GRO-C

Jonathan Roland Briggs

Dated ... 17 / 01 / 2019